

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
June 16, 1998, Designation List 294  
LP-1988

**Fire Engine Company 39 and Ladder Company 16 Station House**, 157-159 East 67th Street, Borough of Manhattan. Built 1884-86; architects N. LeBrun & Son.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1402, Lot 29.

On April 21, 1998, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of Fire Engine Company 39 and Ladder Company 16 Station House (Item No. 7). The hearing was duly advertised according to the provisions of law. Two witnesses spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. Manhattan Community Board 8 has submitted a resolution supporting this designation.

### Summary

Fire Engine Company 39 and Ladder Company 16 Station House is an outstanding example of late nineteenth century civic architecture. Built in 1884-86, the six-story Romanesque Revival structure was designed by N. LeBrun & Son for the headquarters of the New York Fire Department and to provide fire protection in a neighborhood that was experiencing considerable growth and change. Between 1879 and 1894 LeBrun was closely associated with the department, designing more than 40 buildings. Unlike many modest mid-block firehouses, the East 67th Street building served multiple functions, providing space for two fire companies, the offices of the Commissioners, and various departmental bureaux. Restored in 1992, the East 67th Street building provides a superb centerpiece in one of New York's best-preserved rows of nineteenth century public architecture.<sup>1</sup>



## DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

### The Fire Department of the City of New York<sup>2</sup>

From its first days as a Dutch colony to the end of the Civil War, New York City relied on unpaid volunteers to help extinguish fires. While under Dutch rule all men were expected to participate, under the British, a force of thirty volunteers was organized by the General Assembly of the Colony in 1737 to operate two Newsham hand pumpers that had been recently imported from London. After the Revolution, a few tentative steps were taken to give fire-fighting a more professional character. Authorized by the New York State Legislature in 1798, the Volunteer Fire Department of the City of New York was placed under the supervision of a paid engineer and six subordinates.

Over the next half century, the city grew and so did the number of volunteer firemen, which increased from 600 in 1800 to more than 4,000 by 1860. Despite growing numbers, the department was frequently criticized for its poor performance. Disapproval was especially strong during the Civil War, a period when many members of the force resigned to serve in the Union Army, leaving the department without sufficient personnel. Under such circumstances, interest grew in creating a paid, stable, professional force -- like that of the Metropolitan Police District. Advocates maintained, based on recent experience in Albany, Boston, Buffalo, Cincinnati, New Orleans, and London, a paid force would be better equipped to protect the city from fires.

On May 30, 1865, the New York State Legislature established the Metropolitan Fire District, comprising the cities of New York and Brooklyn. The act abolished the old volunteer system and created the Metropolitan Fire Department, under the jurisdiction of the state government. This action had two goals: first, to improve fire protection, and second, to limit the influence of the long-dominant Tammany political machine, whose members frequently used service in the department to advance their private careers. Results were immediate; by the end of 1865, thousands of volunteers had retired and numerous companies were disbanded, to be replaced by thirty-three engine companies and twelve ladder companies operated by a force of five hundred men. Furthermore, in an effort to

filter out any lingering Tammany influence, the Commissioners banned firehouse construction for five years.<sup>3</sup>

Under General Alexander T. Shaler, who served as President of the Board of Fire Commissioners between 1867 and 1870, many important changes were initiated. A former volunteer fireman and decorated Civil War general who served in the prestigious Seventh Regiment, he reorganized the department "according to a military model in which specialization, discipline, and merit were encouraged by a system of daily advisory orders, trials for disobedience, and ranks."<sup>4</sup> Despite the Metropolitan Fire Department's generally excellent record, with a steady decline in annual property losses, the City sought and regained permanent control of the department under the Charter of 1870 (commonly known as the "Tweed Charter").

During the 1860s and 1870s there was increasing pressure to expand and improve service. Not only did the city nearly double in size with the annexation of the western portion of the Bronx in 1874, but the growing number of tall buildings placed new demands on the practice of fire-fighting. In response, funds were spent to upgrade the department's equipment and training. An improved fire alarm telegraph was purchased, as well as gas floodlights, taller ladders, and steam engines with increased pumping pressure for all companies. Classes in the use of this equipment and life-saving techniques were organized, as well as a School of Instruction for Foremen and Engineers of steamers in 1878 and a school for uniformed men in 1883.<sup>5</sup> Support for the paid department remained strong which resulted in increased public funding and growing pride among members of the force.

### History of the Site

Since the late seventeenth century much of East 67th Street has been publicly owned. Despite discussion by the Common Council to lease the so-called "Dove Lots" for private development in April 1806,<sup>6</sup> by 1813 the blocks between Third and Fifth Avenue and from East 66th to East 68th Street had been set aside as a fifteen-acre square named after the former Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton. Following the Civil War, however, the park was

closed. Streets were soon extended through the site and lots in the western half were sold to developers.

During the 1870s the Upper East Side underwent considerable development. While much of the area did become residential, the blocks east of Park Avenue between 66th Street and 68th Street retained their public and institutional character. Describing the site of the future headquarters, the *New York Times* reported: "The neighborhood is a constant wonder to visitors to New-York because of the great group of public institutions -- medical, charitable, and educational -- that are built within a stone's throw of one another."<sup>7</sup> These included Presbyterian, Mount Sinai and German Hospitals, the Normal College, Grammar School No. 76, and the Asylum for the Improved Instruction of Deaf-mutes, as well as the Lenox Library and the Seventh Regiment Armory (1877-79, Charles W. Clinton, a designated New York City Landmark).

Engine Company No. 39 was organized in a small building on the site in March 1875. Although the Upper East Side would become one of Manhattan's most prestigious neighborhoods by the turn of the century, at this time it was a district marked by strong contrasts. On the blocks immediately to the west of the firehouse were mostly private residences, and to the east, tenements, cigar factories, and "streets infested with gangs of the worst ruffians in the city."<sup>8</sup>

These differences may have been viewed as an obstacle to future residential development. East 67th street, consequently, became a logical location for the new department headquarters. Not only would such a public project serve to stabilize the neighborhood, but in terms of geography and access the area had other advantages as well. Set midway between the more-established districts and fire companies to the south and the new suburban companies in upper Manhattan and the Bronx, the slightly elevated site on Lenox Hill afforded extensive views in all directions. Furthermore, it was well-served by public transportation. With a station of the Third Avenue elevated train at the corner of East 67th Street, the site was convenient for both staff and visitors.

#### The Fire Department Headquarters

The East 67th Street structure was the first

and only headquarters building constructed by the New York City Fire Department.<sup>9</sup> It replaced the former Firemen's Hall, a three-story Italianate structure designed by the architects Field & Correja at 155-157 Mercer Street (1853-54, SoHo-Cast Iron Historic District).<sup>10</sup> Built by the City of New York for the use of New York Hose Company No. 5 and Lafayette Hook and Ladder Company No. 6, it served primarily as gathering place for various groups associated with the volunteer department. The upper stories, which were known for their opulent interiors, contained a library, meeting hall, and committee rooms.<sup>11</sup>

The Metropolitan Fire Department converted Firemen's Hall into its headquarters in 1865, replacing an earlier facility at 21 Elizabeth Street. This relocation symbolized a new era. No longer associated with the excesses of past political administrations, the building became an administrative center, with departmental offices, a library for the firemen, and a room for the fire alarm telegraph which had been repaired and moved from City Hall in 1867.

From Mercer Street the department directed an extremely ambitious building campaign. Although the Metropolitan Fire Department's ban on the construction of new firehouses ended in 1870, it took nearly a decade until building actually resumed. In 1884, approximately midway in the campaign, a design for the East 67th Street site was approved. The need for a much larger facility had been evident for more than a decade, but not until 1879 when a series of fires in the dry goods district came dangerously close to destroying the headquarters, was such a move justified.<sup>12</sup> Advocates were particularly concerned about the fate of the telegraph, a communications system that linked all engine houses, watch towers, and fireboxes to the central headquarters.

Mayor Franklin Edson, who strongly supported relocation, addressed the problem in 1883 noting "the rather anomalous and startling fact that the Headquarters of the Fire Department is itself in danger of destruction at any time, the consequences of which might be disastrous beyond measure . . . the first step should be to provide a triplicate set of communicating apparatus and place it in a secure spot, and the next should be to erect a suitable fire-proof building, with proper provision in it for the

important and growing Bureau of Inspection of Buildings, which is now crowded into a single room of this admirably arranged and methodically conducted Department."<sup>13</sup>

#### Napoleon LeBrun & Sons, Architect<sup>14</sup>

Napoleon Eugene Charles LeBrun (1821-1901) was chosen to design the new headquarters, an architect known for both his ecclesiastical commissions and pioneering fire-proof designs. Born to French immigrant parents in Philadelphia, as a teenager he apprenticed with Thomas Ustick Walter (1804-87), the Philadelphia architect responsible for numerous public commissions in the neo-classical style, including Girard College of Orphans (Philadelphia, 1833-48), the United States Capitol Extension (Washington, D.C., 1851) and dome (Washington, D.C., 1856). In 1841 LeBrun established his own firm, designing numerous churches and public buildings in the Philadelphia area, including the Roman Catholic Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul (1846-64) and the Academy of Music (1852-57). After 1864 LeBrun relocated his firm to New York City where he received a number of high-profile commissions, including Masonic Hall (1870-75, demolished), at the southeast corner of 23rd Street and Sixth Avenue. Chosen by public competition, the French Second Empire design did much to establish the firm's reputation.<sup>15</sup>

Over the next three decades, LeBrun designed a great variety of structures, including churches, tenements, and several office towers.<sup>16</sup> Among his clients, the New York City Fire Department proved to be the most significant. Contact began in 1879 when LeBrun served as the AIA representative on the Board of Examiners of the Building Bureau of the Fire Department. Between 1879 and 1894, he received more than forty commissions from the department, including numerous engine houses in Manhattan and the Bronx, a warehouse, and fire pier. It was during these productive years that both of his sons, Pierre LeBrun and Michel LeBrun joined the firm and its name was subsequently altered to N. LeBrun & Son (and later, Sons) to acknowledge their increasing roles.

#### The Building

Among the four public buildings that presently stand on East 67th Street between

Lexington and Third Avenues, the Fire Department's headquarters was the first (and largest) to be completed. Construction commenced in 1884 and lasted nearly two years. Engine Company No. 39, newly organized Ladder Company 16,<sup>17</sup> and various departmental agencies were consolidated in the new "practically fire-proof" building. As completed, the building and its furnishings cost more than \$175,000.<sup>18</sup> Most of the interior was devoted to administrative offices, which for several years had leased additional space on Mercer Street, and training facilities, that had been "kindly permitted the use of an unoccupied building at the foot of West One Hundred and Fifty-eighth street."<sup>19</sup>

LeBrun, who is credited with standardizing firehouse design in New York, organized the building's plan as follows: the ground floor was used primarily to store fire-fighting apparatus for the engine companies and the second floor provided rooms for the uniformed men, including their dormitory, offices, and kitchen. Though most of the ground floor was set aside for the two companies, to the right at the base of the tower was the entrance to the fire headquarters. An hydraulic elevator and stairs led up to the third floor to the offices of the Commissioners and the Chief of the Department and staffs. On the fourth floor was the Department Attorney and the Bureau of Inspection of Buildings; the fifth was assigned to the Bureau of Combustibles, the School of Instruction and the Medical Officers; and the sixth provided space for the Fire Alarm Telegraph and the Bureau of the Fire Marshall.<sup>20</sup>

From the eastern side of the top floor, one ascended to the belfry by stairs, and then to the observatory, where a "fireman detailed as watchman constantly scanned the horizon for evidences of fire."<sup>21</sup> Based more on fire-fighting tradition than actual use, the decision to erect a 150 foot-tall tower had much to do with civic imagery, symbolizing the department and its important public function. Within two decades of the building's construction, nearby apartment towers would start to obscure the observatory's once-panoramic views.

During his long career, LeBrun worked in a number of popular styles. As in many of his department commissions, he employed Romanesque Revival details -- round-arched

windows, drip molds, and organic ornament -- juxtaposed against smooth red brick. Although the decoration owed a clear debt to H. H. Richardson and his much-praised public work of the late 1870s and after, Engine Company No. 39 also incorporated French Second Empire motifs such as the mansard roof and the pyramidally-capped tower. As one of LeBrun's earliest office buildings, the elevation has a somewhat tentative quality, reflecting the much-discussed Tribune Building (1873-75, demolished) designed by Richard Morris Hunt. Although LeBrun did not use neo-Grec detailing as Hunt did in his design, he did model its composition after the Renaissance palazzo formula the noted architect helped develop, placing a brick tower on a two-story brownstone base capped by a mansard roof pierced by dormers. In addition, both projects featured a tower with look-out balcony.

A reception was held to celebrate the building's completion in April 1887. Guests were invited to inspect the oak interiors, climb the tower, and watch a display in the rear yard of the latest fire-fighting techniques. *The Record and Guide* commented: "The Fire Department headquarters would be worthy of praise whoever had built it, but it deserves special praise as having been done under the direction of a municipal department and giving the taxpayers something worth looking at for their money."<sup>22</sup>

#### Subsequent History

By 1914 the headquarters had outgrown the upper floors of the East 67th Street building, relocating its offices to the eleventh floor of the recently completed Municipal Building at 1 Centre Street. The fire telegraph, however, remained until it was moved to Central Park in 1922. For much of the twentieth century the building served as the department's training center. With the introduction of motorized vehicles in 1907<sup>23</sup> the stables at the rear were eliminated and replaced by a small brick extension. In 1913 several structures were constructed in the yard facing East 68th Street, including a sprinkler and ventilating test house. In 1949 the former headquarters' most prominent feature, the lookout tower, was removed from the top of the eastern bay.

During the early 1970s the city proposed to demolish the firehouse and adjacent police

precinct station house and incorporate them into the planned expansion of Hunter College designed by the architect Ulrich Franzen. In January 1980 the Landmarks Commission designated four buildings on the block as New York City Landmarks. Although the Board of Estimate overturned the designation of the firehouse and police precinct in June 1980, the various agencies involved did agree to meet to discuss alternative strategies. In 1982, a new scheme, designed by the Stein Partnership, was approved that preserved the facades of both structures while constructing a new combined facility behind them.<sup>24</sup> As completed in 1992, the building's facade was completely restored, including cast-stone replacements for its greatly deteriorated brownstone.<sup>25</sup> Although the building still serves its original function as an Engine and Ladder Company, the floors once occupied by the Commissioners and their staff are now connected to, and used by, the 19th Police Precinct, linked by a five-story granite structure set back thirty feet from the sidewalk. Originally used as a narrow passage to the rear yard on 68th Street, this recessed addition incorporates a new, third, apparatus bay for Fire Department vehicles.

#### Building Description

Fire Engine Company 39 and Ladder Company 16 Station house is a six-story Romanesque Revival structure with a red brick, gray granite, and brownstone facade. The first two floors, covered with rusticated brownstone, house the companies. The first floor has two equal-sized apparatus bays surfaced in cast iron that have been painted a bright red. Each garage door incorporates a pair of single-pane windows. The pier between the doors is also clad in cast iron and includes five narrow vertical panels with three leaf-like decorative motifs near the top. Above each entrance is an I-beam decorated with a string of five raised rosettes framed by a pair of salamander heads facing inward, a common symbol for fire fighters.<sup>26</sup> Installed above these beams are two signs of nearly identical size with gold capital lettering on a black background that identify each company.

On the right side of the first floor is the former entrance to the fire department headquarters marked by an elaborate stone portico supported by a pair of pink polished



granite columns set on engaged granite pedestals. The upper portion, which underwent extensive restoration, features an inset segmental arch crowned by checkerboard patterning. The swirling engaged basket capitals that spring from the freestanding columns are particularly elaborate, as are the wave flame motifs just above the capitals. Between the columns an office and firehouse entry has been inserted, consisting of a single door on the left and an iron bay window with visible rivets supported by a small girder set at an angle. Above this addition is an I-beam which creates a transom over which an open grille covers an air-conditioner. All of these 1992 additions have been painted dark green to match the window moldings on each of the five floors above.

The second floor, which is also used by the companies, has two sets of three double-hung windows aligned above the vehicular entrances. Between each set a flagpole has been installed. In the right-hand bay, above the original entrance to the headquarters, is a single window framed by a pair of recessed tablets, each surrounded by billet moldings arranged in the shape of an octagon with floral designs at each corner. The right inscription reads:

FIRE/ DEPARTMENT/ HEADQUARTERS/  
LIFE-SAVING CORPS/ & SCHOOL OF/  
PROBATION/ ORGANIZED/ 1882

The left:

A.D. 1886/ COMMISSIONERS/ HENRY D.  
PURROY/ PRESIDENT/ RICHARD CROKER/  
ELWARD SMITH/ N.LEBRUN & SON/  
ARCHITECTS

A continuous dentil molding divides the second and third stories, marking a clear division between the facilities for the companies and the former headquarters. As in the floor below, there are three groups of windows, all with brownstone surrounds and a continuous zigzag molding which ends in blocks carved with organic ornament at the impost level. The right-hand bay has a single round-arch window with a stone transom through which the zigzag molding intersects. Twisted columns frame this double-hung window, and its spandrel is decorated with a checkerboard panel. The much larger arched tripartite windows that align with the firehouse entries, have floral moldings on the surrounds

and generously sized oval balconies which rest on piers that divide the second story windows below. Each balustrade, which was restored in 1992, has polished granite colonnettes with elaborate brownstone capitals and bases.

The fourth story has five double-hung windows of identical size. A single round-arch window is positioned at right, while two sets of paired round-arch windows are aligned above the apparatus bays. Each of these windows has brownstone sills terminating in bosses and identical lintels with raised billet work.

On the fifth floor are seven double-hung windows with brownstone arches. There is a single window in the right-hand bay, while the rest are arranged in groups of three, divided by four gray polished granite columns with brownstone capitals and bases. A continuous brownstone sill, terminating in bosses, extends beneath the six windows.

The top story is divided into two parts: the base that remains from the demolished tower, and a heavily ornamented cornice above which a dark slate roof rises. The mansard roof incorporates two brownstone dormers, each lighted by a pair of round-arch windows set beneath a triangular pediment carved with a diagonal grid of ornament and topped by circular medallions. Along the left edge of the slate roof, supported by the cornice, is a brownstone chimney. The tower bay at right has double-arched windows with a brownstone sill. Just above these windows is the building's highest point, marked by an unornamented brownstone cornice and a row of four small brownstone corbels.

The building's east and west elevations are almost entirely new brick construction. The east elevation, which is not visible, except from a narrow passage between the firehouse and synagogue, has two pairs of flat-arched tripartite windows with projecting gray granite sills that are located close to the front of the building on the fifth and sixth floors, as well as four windows set in row between the second and third floors.

To the west, set back approximately thirty feet from the street is a gray granite addition, linking the firehouse and police station. The ground level serves as a third apparatus bay for the firehouse, while the floors above, each with a set of two windows, are used by the police

precinct. All of these windows are set behind flat-arched screens with transoms, except for the fifth floor which are shaped like rectangles. Here the west elevation of the firehouse is clearly visible, clad entirely in red brick. There is a single window at the second, third, and

fourth levels, each with projecting granite sills. On the fourth floor is a second, smaller window in which a security camera has been installed.

Report prepared by  
Matthew A. Postal  
Research Department

## NOTES

1. From east to west, these buildings include The Park East Synagogue, the 19th Police Precinct, and the former Mt. Sinai dispensary.
2. The following sources were consulted for this section: Donald J. Cannon, "The Fire Department of the City of New York, 1835-1898: A Study of Institutional Adaptability," Ph.D diss., Fordham University, 1976; Donald J. Cannon, "Firefighting," *The Encyclopedia of New York City*, ed. Kenneth T. Jackson (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995); Augustine E. Costello, *Our firemen, A history of the New York fire departments, volunteer and paid* (New York: A. E. Costello, 1887); Kenneth Holcomb Dunshee, *As You Pass By* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1940); Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Engine Company No. 47* (LP-1962) report prepared by Laura Hansen (New York: City of New York, 1997); *Fire House* (*Engine Company 39, Ladder Company 16*), report prepared by Barry Bergdoll (New York: City of New York, 1980); Rebecca Zurier, *The American FireHouse: An Architectural and Social History* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1992); James D. McCabe, Jr. "The Fire Department," *New York By Gaslight*, reprint of 1882 edition of *New York by Sunlight and Gaslight* (New York: Arlington House, 1984); Daniel Pisark, "Old New York and Brooklyn Firehouses: Their Evolution, Architecture, and Preservation" (unpublished typescript, New York Landmark Scholar report, 1976).
3. Hansen, 2.
4. Cannon, "Firefighting," 411; and Cannon, "The Fire Department of the City of New York, 1835-1898," 255.
5. Today the Firemen's Training Center is located on Ward's Island.
6. *Minutes of the Common Council of the City of New York, 1784-1831* (New York, 1917) vol. 4, 173-74.
7. "Two Model Structures, Fire and Police Protection Uptown," *New York Times*, 26 September 1885, 8.
8. Ibid.
9. In 1892 the Brooklyn Fire Department built its own headquarters at 365-367 Jay Street. A designated New York City Landmark, the Romanesque Revival structure was designed by Frank Freeman.
10. The lots were purchased in 1817 and 1831. This was the second Firemen's Hall at this location. The first paid company to use the Mercer Street building was Ladder 20, organized in 1889. See Clarence E. Meeks, "Historic Fire Dept Buildings Still in Use," *WFNY*, October 1958, 8-9.
11. For an image of the original facade, see Dunshee, 261.
12. During the 1870s losses from fires were on the rise. Cannon described a fire at Broadway and Grand Street in 1876 as the city's worst since 1845. See Cannon, "The Fire Department of New York, 1835-1898," 255.

13. *Report of the Fire Department of the City of New York For the Three Months and Year Ending December 31, 1886, 1887, 109.*
14. The following sources were consulted for this section: Constance M. Greif, "Napoleon LeBrun," *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, Adolf K. Placzek, ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1982); Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Fire Engine Company No. 47* (LP-1962) report prepared by Laura Hansen (New York: City of New York, 1990); "Obituary, Napoleon LeBrun," *New York Times*, 21 July 1902, 1; Montgomery Schuyler, "The Work of N. LeBrun & Sons," *Architectural Record* 27 (May 1910), 365-381.
15. Other LeBrun structures designated by the Landmarks Preservation Commission include: Home Life Insurance Company Building (1892-94), Fire Engine Company No. 31 (1895), Fire Hook and Ladder Company No. 14 (now Fire Engine Company No. 36, 1888-89), Fire Engine Company No. 47 (1889-90), Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (1907-1909), Church of Saint Mary-the-Virgin (Episcopal) Complex (1894-95); St. Cecilia's Church (R.C.) and Regina Angelorum (1883-87), as well as addition to the Packer Collegiate Institute for Girls (1884 and 1886). LeBrun firehouses can also be found in the Greenwich Village, Ladies' Mile, and Upper West Side Historic Districts.
16. For chronology of LeBrun's career see Leland Grant, "A Chronology (woefully tentative and incomplete!) of the Career of Napoleon Le Brun," (typescript in the architect's file at the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission) 24 April 1975.
17. *Report of the Fire Department* commented in 1887 that Ladder Company No. 16 was "necessitated by the many schools, asylums, hospitals, etc. located in the vicinity, as well as by the fact that prior to its organization there was no hook and ladder company on the east side of the city, between Fiftieth and Eighty-Seventh streets," 110.
18. Amy C. Martin, "Facades and Reality: Firehouses of N. LeBrun and Sons" M.A. thesis, Columbia University, 1993, 69.
19. *Report of the Fire Department*, 1887, 110.
20. *Ibid.*, 110-111.
21. Meeks, 9.
22. "Fire Department Headquarters," *The Record and Guide*, 18 June 1887, 880.
23. Cannon, 412.
24. Lee Goff, "Rebuilding: The Combined Facility Building Renovation," *Building Renovation*, January-February 1993, 40-45. "Rehab on 67th," *New York Times*, 29 September 1985, sec. 8, 1.
25. These replicas, produced in glass-fiber-reinforced concrete, were produced by Gianetti Studio using rubber molds made from surviving ornament and "extrapolations" inspired by style books and historic photographs. Goff, 43-44.
26. Salamanders are mythical creatures said to endure fire without harm. These symbols also appear on the sides of each company's vehicles.



## FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, of the architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that Fire Engine Company 39 and Ladder Company 16 Station House has a special character, and special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, Engine Company 39 and Ladder Company 16 Station house, built in 1884-86 for the New York City Fire Department is an outstanding example of late nineteenth century civic architecture; that it was designed by N. LeBrun and Son in the Romanesque Revival style, and is one of more than forty buildings designed by the LeBrun firm during its association with the department between 1879 and 1894; that it was designed to serve multiple functions in a neighborhood that was experiencing considerable growth and change, providing space for two fire companies, the offices of the commissioners, and various departmental bureaux; and that the building was restored in 1992 and provides a superb centerpiece in one of the city's best-preserved rows of nineteenth century public architecture.

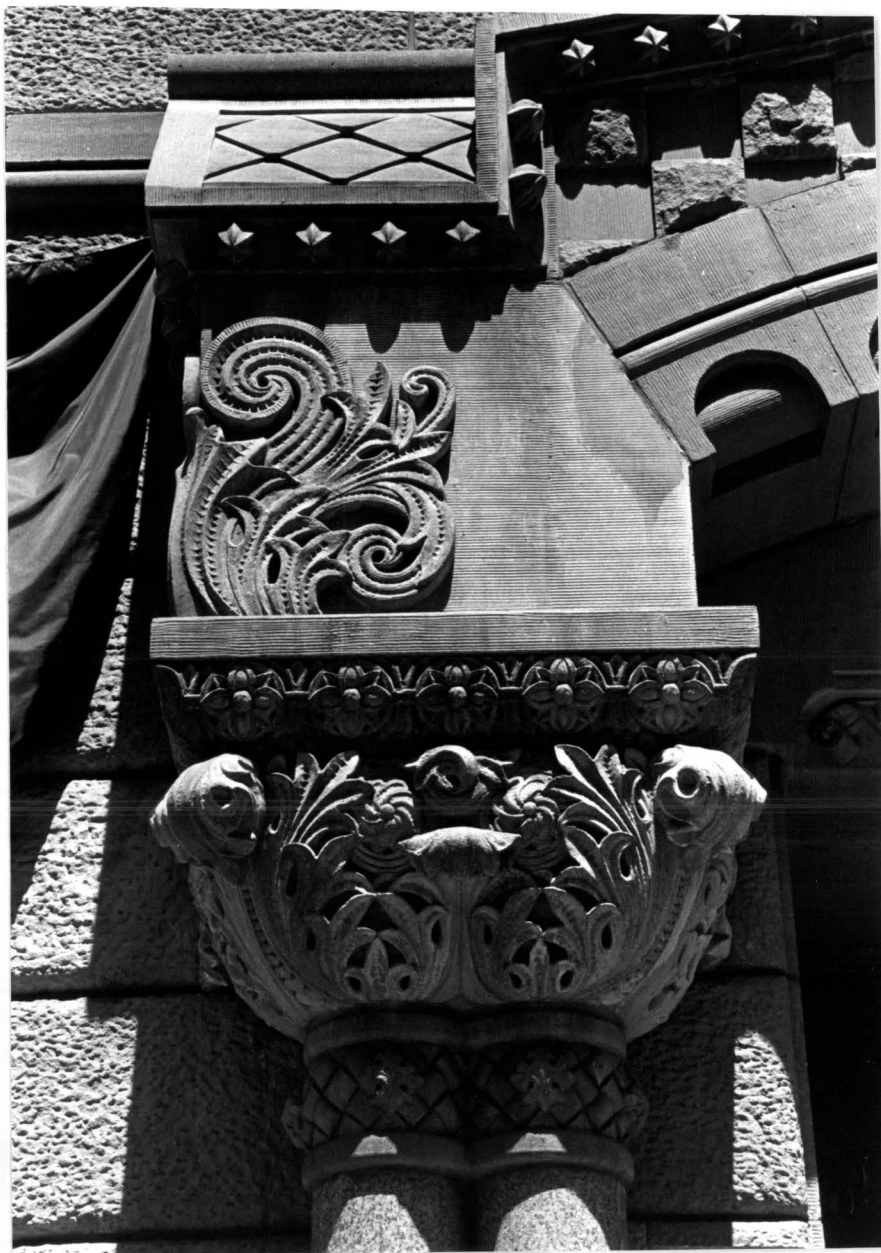
Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark Engine Company 39 and Ladder Company 16 Station House, 157-159 East 67th Street, Manhattan, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1402, Lot 29, as its Landmark site.



Fire Engine Company 39 and Ladder Company 16 Station House, Manhattan  
157-59 East 67th Street  
*Photo: Carl Forster*



East 67th Street, between Third and Lexington Avenues, looking west, circa 1920  
Source: Museum of the City of New York, reprinted in *New York Times*, 3 May 1998.



Fire Engine Co. 39 and Ladder Co. 16 Station House  
Entrance portico, detail left side  
*Photo: Carl Forster*



Fire Engine Co. 39 and Ladder Co. 16 Station House  
Entrance portico  
*Photo: Carl Forster*





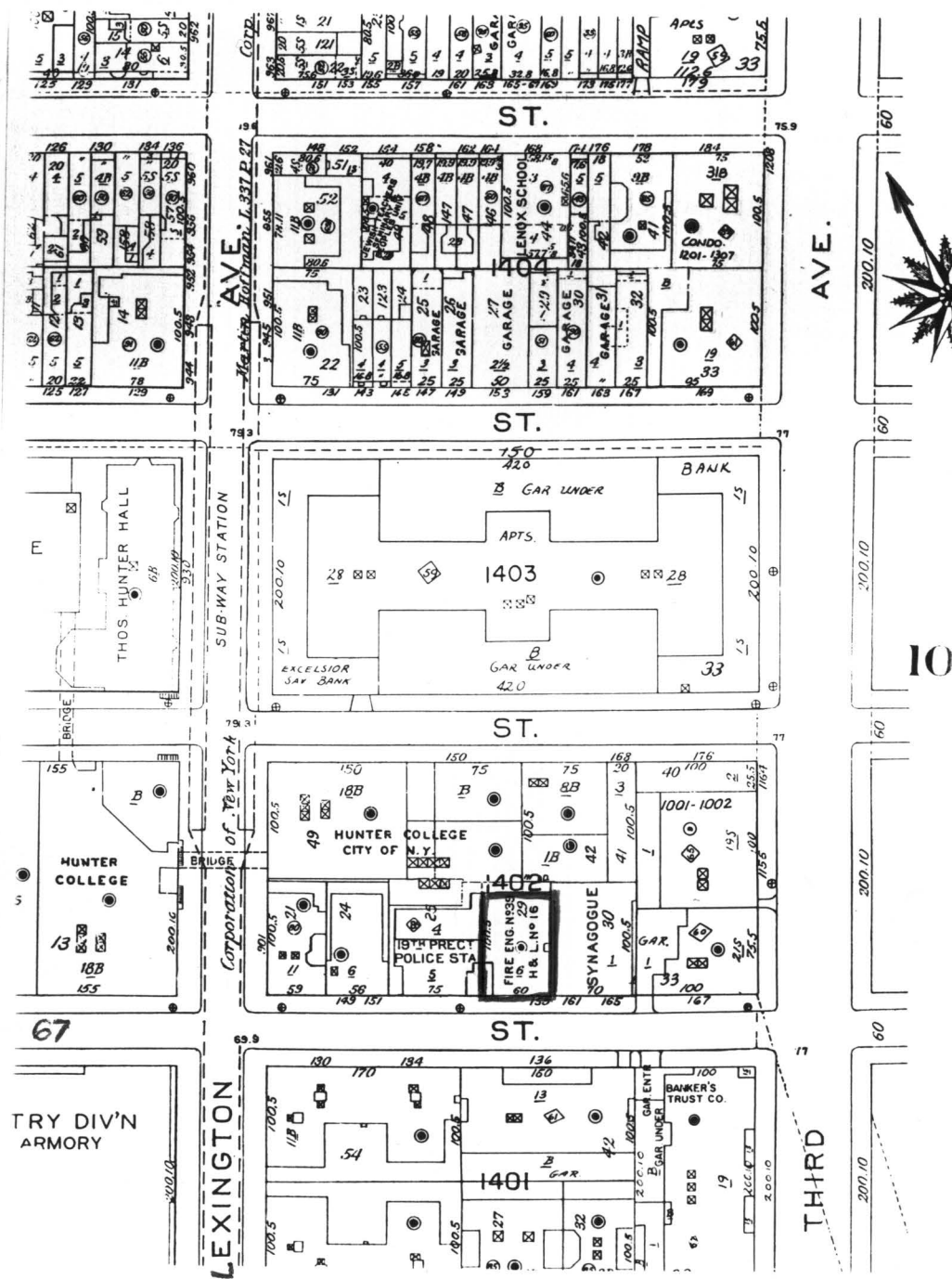
Fire Engine Company 39 and Ladder Company 16 Station House  
Fifth and sixth floors



Fire Engine Company 39 and Ladder Company 16 Station House  
Third floor window and balconies

*Photos: Carl Forster*





Fire Engine Company 39 and Ladder Company 16 Station House  
 157-159 East 67th Street, Manhattan  
 Landmark Site; Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1402, Lot 29  
 Source: Sandborn Manhattan Landbook, 1997-98, detail, plate 106

